



CITIZENS UTILITY BOARD

Empowering Minnesota Consumers

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February 13, 2024

Senator Nick Frentz
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 2415
St. Paul, MN 55155

Members, Senate Energy, Utilities, Environment, and Climate Committee

RE: Support for confirmation of Commissioner Hwikwon Ham

Dear Senator Frentz and committee members:

I write to express my support for the confirmation of Public Utilities Commission (PUC) Commissioner Hwikwon Ham. Commissioner Ham brings a deep understanding of utilities, utility regulation, and valuable technical knowledge that is critically important at this stage of the energy transition.

I am the executive director of the Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota (CUB), a nonprofit advocate for Minnesota utility consumers. CUB advocates for affordable utility service, clean energy, and consumer protections. CUB frequently participates in proceedings before the PUC, and I, myself, often prepare filings and represent our organization in PUC hearings.

As you are aware, it is an especially busy time in the utility world: older electric generation resources are largely being retired; electric utilities are transitioning to newer, cleaner, largely variable resources; electricity usage is increasing due in part to the electrification of transportation and heating; and there is an active discussion about the future of natural gas utilities. CUB welcomes the move to clean energy, and we also recognize that this transition holds substantial risks for utility consumers.

I believe that it is important for the five commissioners to bring a variety of expertise and professional backgrounds. Commissioner Ham will contribute helpful experience and expertise to help guide the PUC through the complex matters before it in the coming years. Commissioner Ham brings critical technical knowledge, particularly related to the regional grid system. His background in economics will also be important in considering the complex financial questions that underlie the important balance between utility business health and customer affordability.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

Annie Levenson-Falk
Executive Director

cc: PUC Chair Katie Sieben
PUC Commissioner Hwikwon Ham
Will Seuffert
Joe Birkholz